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quick facts on...

Land Management Planning

*A key to effective stewardship
of Florida's land resources*

NOVEMBER 2006

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts.

Our Mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems, and water supply.



The District's Land Stewardship Program provides natural resource protection and management while allowing compatible multiple uses on designated public lands.

In Florida, land and water are interconnected and interdependent, in both obvious and subtle ways. By acquiring lands for the public, they can be managed and restored to preserve water resources as well as the land. Once lands have been acquired, they must be managed consistent with the purpose for which they were purchased. This may be to restore and preserve them in their natural state and condition or to maintain them for future water resources management projects

The South Florida Water Management District's Land Stewardship Program manages property owned or controlled by the agency. Lands are protected, enhanced, restored and preserved for project purposes and for the use and enjoyment of existing and future generations.

The Land Stewardship Program includes activities to restore lands to their natural state and condition, manage them in an environmentally acceptable manner, and to provide public recreational opportunities that are compatible with protecting natural resources. Additionally, the Land Stewardship Program includes activities to manage those properties that are acquired by the District for future Everglades restoration or other projects until such time as the land is needed for construction. Program activities include: developing and implementing land management plans, controlling invasive exotic plants, restoring natural fire regimes, restoring native plant communities, employing multiple-use practices, managing interim agricultural uses through reservations, lease agreements or similar agreements and opening lands for appropriate public use.

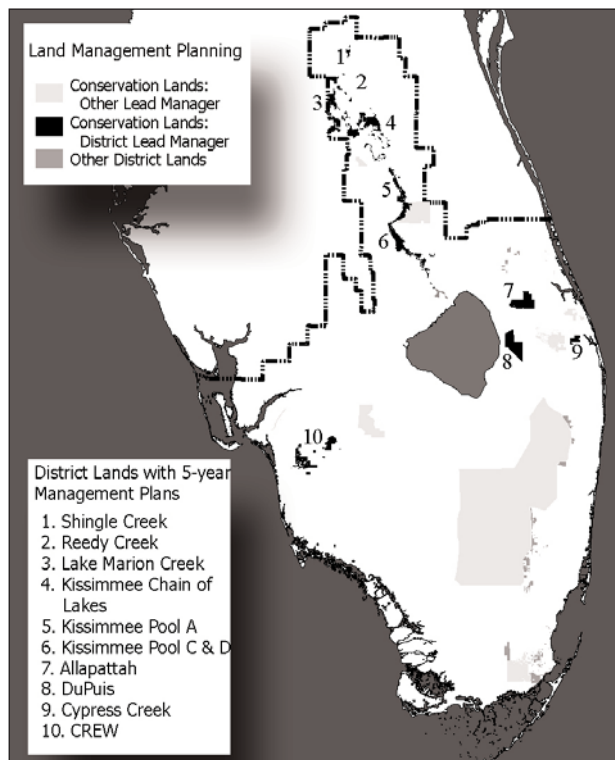


A multi-party team reviews land management plans every five years for District-managed conservation lands.

Planning: A Team Effort

Land management planning is an important first step along the path of effective stewardship of Florida's land resources. Management plans are required by Florida statutes to be written for all District conservation lands over 1,000 acres. These plans are to be reviewed by a multi-party review team and updated every 10 years, although the District is committed to exceed this standard by having management reviews every five years. A management plan review team consists of one member each from these entities:

- South Florida Water Management District
- private land manager
- local soil and water conservation district board of supervisors
- Florida Division of Forestry
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- conservation organization
- user group such as a recreational association
- resident of the county where the property is located



The South Florida Water Management District owns or controls about 1.2 million acres of land in 25 projects that are managed for conservation purposes, including the Water Conservation Areas (see map). The District has developed partnerships with other agencies to help manage these projects. The District creates General Management Plans on 10 of those projects.

Management activities are designed for each site based on the Land Stewardship Program's mission for conservation lands "to provide natural resource protection and management while allowing compatible multiple uses on designated public lands." The Land Stewardship Program has three primary goals for managing the District's conservation lands:

- Conserve and protect water resources
- Protect and/or restore land to its natural state and condition
- Provide public use

To accomplish these goals, the Land Stewardship Program performs six major functions:

- Strategic, project, and management planning
- Operation and maintenance of land resources
- Development of public use programs
- Development of restoration projects
- Evaluation of management activities
- Administration of land management service contracts and lease agreements

The General Management Plans include goals and objectives, past and present land uses, resource data, restoration and management needs, public use programs, compatible multiple uses, monitoring programs, site security, and administrative duties to guide management actions for the five-year period. As such, General Management Plans serve as a collective information source for District management staff, agency partners and the general public.

For more information about the South Florida Water Management District's Land Stewardship Program/General Management Plans, contact Land Management Planner David Foote at **(561) 682-2686** or dfoote@sfwmd.gov.



Land management activities for the future, such as prescribed burns and controlling invasive exotic plants, requires looking at how effective past management has been and changing those activities when appropriate.



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 Florida Keys (Plantation Key)
 305-853-3219 or 800-464-5067
 Lower West Coast
 239-338-2929 or 800-248-1201

Martin/St. Lucie
 772-223-2600 or 800-250-4100
 Miami-Dade
 305-377-7274 or 800-250-4300
 Okeechobee
 863-462-5260 or 800-250-4200
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